

Discovery of a New Pterosaur Tracksite at Flaming Gorge Reservoir

by Martha Hayden

In the spring of 2002 the Utah Geological Survey prepared a paleontological assessment of Flaming Gorge Reservoir for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, in order to protect fossil resources from the effects of fluctuating lake levels. With the assistance of Barbara Blackshear and others from the Bureau of Reclamation and the Ashley National Forest, the UGS conducted a two-day paleontological survey of formations that may contain important fossils. This survey resulted in the discovery of a very significant locality containing trackways from a sauropod dinosaur and pterosaurs, or flying reptiles.



Overview of tracksite at the top of the Windy Hill Member of the Curtis Formation along the shoreline of Flaming Gorge Reservoir.



Survey crew from the Utah Geological Survey, Bureau of Reclamation, Ashley National Forest and the Utah Field House of Natural History State Park examine a newly discovered tracksite at Flaming Gorge Reservoir.



Close-up of well-preserved forelimb (manus) and hindlimb (pes) pterosaur tracks. Scale bar is in centimeters.



Pterosaur tracks and trackways have been found on many of these rock slabs.



Sauropod trackway on mudcracked surface.